

OPEN FORUM
Y. W. A. Building(19-15)
October 24, 1942
8:15 P.M.-10:00P.M.

Nagumo

Mr. Charles Ferguson, Head of Adult Education, opened the meeting which was attended by more than seventy-five people. The latest Open Forum Meeting was discussed. Then, Mr. Ferguson said that the future leadership in the post-war period will be from the college group people.

The Chairman of the College Association was named as Mr. Henry Ishizuka. The Secretary was introduced as Miss Aki Saito. Various committee heads were Mr. Yuichi Hirata, Miss Sally Kusayanagi, Miss Fumi Shimizu, Mr. Shigeji Takeda, Mr. Akira Hara, Mrs. Kitagawa, Mr. Frank Takahashi, Miss Mari Okazaki, and Mr. George Minamiki. Thus far, no plans or policies have been formulated; however, a meeting was planned for the following Sunday.

Mr. Ferguson stated that a few people would speak for a few minutes on different phases of "The Problems of Youth in Relocation Centers and Problems Arising out of Delinquency." Mr. Sho Onodera was introduced as the first speaker of the evening. Mr. Onodera has the advantage of having studies both here and in Japan. Mr. Sho Onodera (8:25-8:35).

Mr. Onodera introduced the problem by stating that youth problems in Manzanar are not different from those in other places although they may be more intensified here. The people are placed together in a mass; therefore, small problems appear large.

As to juvenile gangs, the Japanese sections of cities have always had to cope with that problem. Gangs were prominent usually in downtown districts and in places ~~where~~ where Japanese gathered. One reason for juvenile gangs was the fact that there were many adult hoodlums running around uncontrolled and unhampered. In Little Tokio there was the Tokio Club, at the time Los Angeles was wide open. People just about got away with murder. The younger people imitated the older and began to copy the bad characteristics.

Studying out of books and rigid family life may not be a solution to the problem. A big question is, "What makes younger people use brute force?" They are young and overflowing with energy. Many are anti-business. They want to push back against those who are against them. As individuals or as small groups, nothing much can be done. They cannot fight back, but they still have energy, so they become or at least try to become "big shots" among themselves. In the past, the young people were in kid gangs, but this eventually lead to paths of crime.

Reference was made to the Mexican minorities from which "zoot suit" bandits sprung. It was pointed out that Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz accused the Japanese of instructing the Mexican gangs and of being the brains behind all the trouble.

From small kid gangs, the activities went from beating up other gangs and individuals to thieving, purse-snatching and affairs of like calibre. Any minority group has a tendency to form such an organization; however, it was Mr. Onodera's opinion that such action was not peculiar to minorities only.

Individually, the fellows are nice, but they aren't so nice when with a gang. There are two cases; (1) some boys are nice individually and bad when in a gang, (2) some boys are nice individually and while with a gang, but become ugly-acting when they are crossed or treated badly.

Usually, gangs have been seen to outgrow their activities and have left them behind. The only trouble was that they taught new boys rotten tricks and then got out of the gang-life. Thus, new recruits were being formed every day.

Mrs. Margaret D'Ille (8:35- 8:47)

Mr. Ferguson introduced Mrs. D'Ille, Assistant Chief of Community Services though directly connected with the Social Service Department, as the next speaker. She used to be a school teacher at one time and her experiences made her feel that what Mr. Onodera said for the Japanese was the same for any other group of people. She also agreed that she couldn't see anything very different in our wickedness (in Manzanar) as compared to any other place where the Japanese people used to live.

Mrs. D'Ille also had worked with relief organizations and of all the cases which came up, practically none of the Japanese people appeared on the records. Also, the delinquency rate of that group was very low. Her work here is of a nature which deals with individual difficulties and family problems. Usually, the trouble arises when two people run against each other or something of that nature. When a person runs against one of the laws, that is called delinquency. However, usually the social problems are caused by some sort of a mental condition.

There is a great disturbance set up in that the people here belong, so to speak, to two countries which were friends for a long time and then suddenly plunged into war. This set-up certain behavior complexes. The people had the feeling of not knowing what was to come next. They felt insecure. They felt that they suffered an injustice. That is exactly what anyone might expect of the circumstances. Doctors might tell anyone who asks about such a problem that there are physical and mental disturbances which come out of such situations as that faced by the Japanese people at the evacuation and all. These disturbances are felt by the younger people. The ones to be most disturbed will be probably those of high school age. Altogether, it is all a question of a disturbed mind.

Usually when people are crowded together as they are in tenement districts, troubles arise. However, this is a different situation. Here, there is good air, good country, good scenery, etc. The people are not massed together in bad conditions. Furthermore,

this type of life here is not because of economic reasons. Most of the problems which arise are already problems before the people came to Manzanar; however, crowding may have tended to bring the difficulties to focus.

Mrs. D'Ille then remarked that personally she felt that within the past two weeks or so, there was a noticeable lessening of tension. This was due in part to the relocation of many individuals. To sum it up, it was stated that the uncertainty and unrest go from the older to the younger ones.

Dr. Genevieve W. Carter 98:47-9:03)

Dr. Carter, Superintendent of Education, was introduced by Mr. Ferguson. She began by saying that it had been some time since she had spoken about delinquency. A few years ago, she was working in Albuquerque, New Mexico, as Chief Probation Officer so she had some experiences with many cases. She said that a delinquent is defined as a minor who has been caught by the law.

Referring to that which was said by Mr. Onodera, she pointed out that boy gangs were largely due to hyper-activity of youths and their proneness to organizing into groups. She personally would rather deal with troubles rising out of gangs rather than dealing with the individual trouble.

Gang trouble is usually the result of some boys seeking recognition as "big shots". Frustration can bring about aggressiveness, but this is not always true. Sometimes the person becomes neurotic and begins to think that everyone is against him. The people in the first category gain recognition because of their actions, but the people in the latter category are not noticed. The same thing is true in the schools when the youngsters begin carrying on their gang activities.

An early reason for criminal activities was the people who were caught were feeble minded. Later, it was thought that poverty caused crime. Still later, that idea was thought to be false. However, those factors such as low economic level and failure of parents to provide for their children adequately do enter into the picture.

Tests were made in families where there were two brothers, one of whom was delinquent and the other not. These brothers had the same heredity, the same housing, and the same environment. Many such cases were studies. The best solution of the problem was that in each case, both brothers were frustrated; however, one was hyper-active and became aggressive while the other was withdrawn and kept to himself. The same is true in Manzanar. Everyone is exposed to the same factors, but some people are better adjusted than others. In this community, the source or reason behind gang trouble is that ~~against~~ the youngsters are anti-something or other. The best method of approach to break up gang-trouble is yet to be worked out. It is only when gangs begin to interfere with society that the problem must be solved. To alleviate the situation, there should be better juvenile laws, protection for juveniles, good counseling, and better home conditions which should serve as bases of good child care and training. It has been found that direct education is not of much avail, whereas conditioning and shaping of the

tion is not of much avail, whereas conditioning and shaping of the character is much better.

Mr. Willard Schmidt (9:03-9:25)

Mr. Schmidt of the Police Department was introduced by Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Schmidt said that conditions in Manzanar are such that if anyone gets into trouble, everyone in the center soon knows about it. Rumors are spread just as easily. In many instances, people are accused wrongly. This tends to make them belligerent.

Policing is primarily an agent for the enforcing of laws made by the community. It is not an organ for the prevention of crime. In the whole of the United States, there is not specific crime prevention agency although the police departments of various localities have taken up some aspects of it. Usually, they try to prevent a second offense. The police is supposed to stop cases from occurring and is not supposed to catch the offenders.

As to blaming heredity and environment for crime, Mr. Schmidt said that he has known police officers with years of training sometimes "with the damndest children", so both environment and heredity cannot be causes.

Recreation departments are outstanding in the field of giving youngsters an outlet for their feelings and energy, but they are held down by people higher up by budgetary means. After all, boys cannot play football without a football.

It was stated that the activity of the criminal element is inversely proportional to police protection with a view to an ultimate goal. Personal handling cases should be trained as well as doctors in psychiatric work. The police should all be well trained. Usually, school teachers are much better trained than police officers in assisting and working on problem. Above all, the police need the cooperation of the majority of the people to work with the best efficiency.

After Mr. Schmidt spoke, various topics such as anxiety neurosis, rumors, and fears were discussed by Mrs. D'Ille, Dr. Carter, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Onodera, Mrs. Ferguson, Mr. Schmidt, Mr. Smeltzer (Secondary teacher), Mr. Nielson (Supervisor of Community Activities), and Miss Mari Okazaki.....